

Listening Intently: 1200 chairs, arranged in two tiers on 144 moving platforms, took about 23 minutes to circumnavigate the 1440' perimeter of the "miniature" Panama Canal. Each 10-foot platform was linked - in groups of three - to one particular selection at a time which was played on three phonographs simultaneously. Thus 45 phonographs were in continuous operation playing 15 selections in all. The sound was conveyed from the phonograph room (p. 9) by wire and rail to duplex telephone receivers on the moving platforms. The canvas shields were placed to heighten the sense of illusion and conceal the stadium from the viewers. *(Courtesy San Francisco Archives)*

## A MAN, A PLAN, A CANAL-PANAMA!

(Thomas Edison and the Panama Canal)

Allen Koenigsberg



Please send all correspondence, subscription orders, and advertising to: **Allen Keeningsberg**

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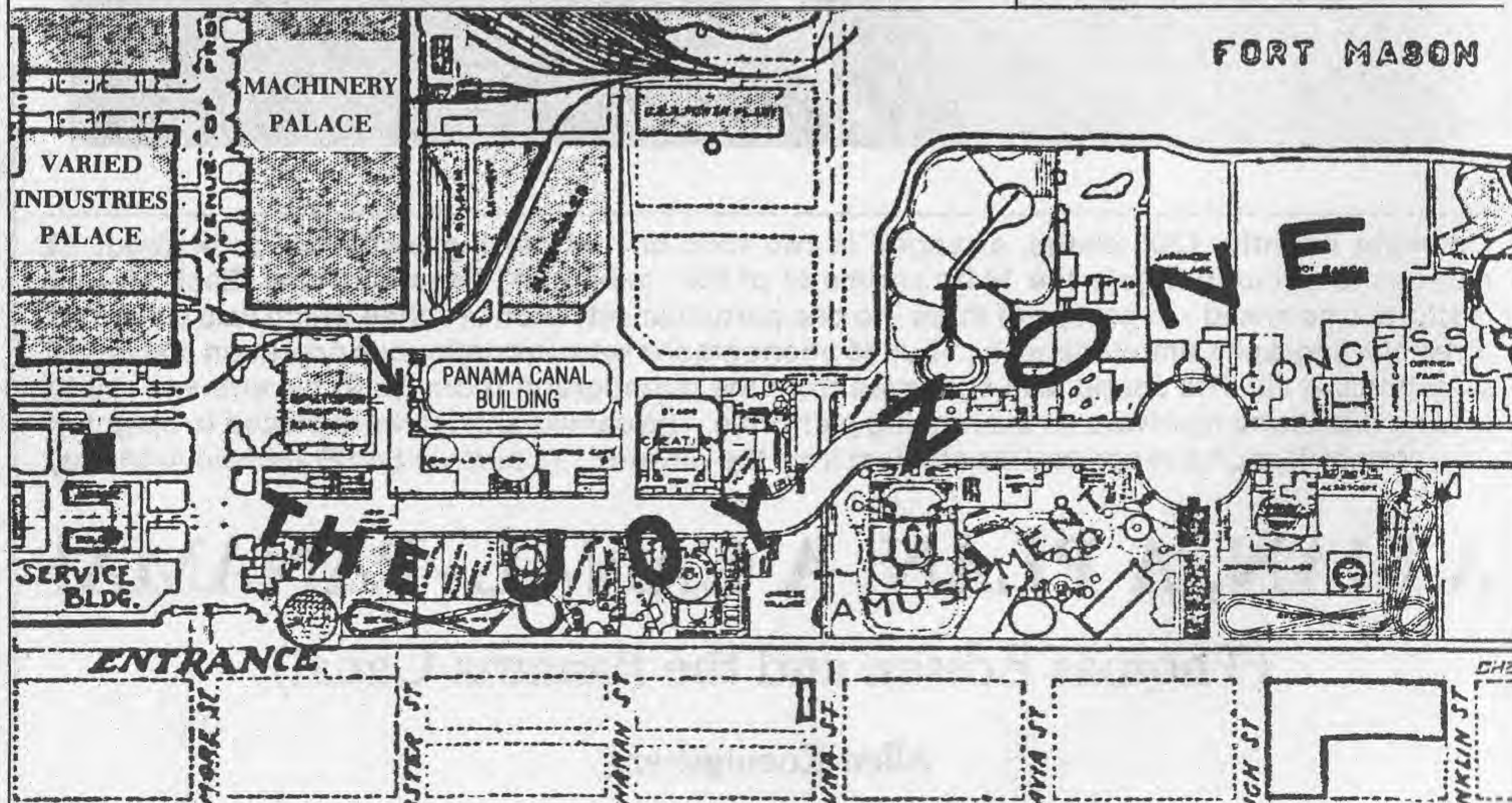
**Question:** Did Tim Brooks, in his article on the early 'Laughing Records' (APM, V, no. 10), ever determine who did the original Beka record from which the US Okeh disc was pressed? **O.K.C., Canton, OH**

**Answer:** Robert Masopust of Basel, Switzerland recently wrote to APM about this article. He was lucky enough to locate the *original* Beka disc 30590, and he reports that it is labeled "Die missgluckte Jugendzeit" - 'The Misfortunes of Youth'. The two individuals laughing are identified as Otto Rathke and Lucie Bernardo.

**Question:** Is there any chance that the legendary and now out-of-print *Edison Cylinder Records, 1889-1912* by Allen Koenigsberg will become available again?

R. W.,  
Arlington, TX

**Answer:** Allen reports that he is hard at work on a new edition of this basic reference work, and has identified additional records, release dates, etc. and has also added the 4-minute wax cylinders made from 1908-1912. A signed, limited edition of 500 is planned. Interested readers may send in a postcard (no money) now to reserve a copy. ☐



**You Are Here:** The arrow indicates the Canal Entrance on this 1915 map (photo p. 3). *(T. Sarro)*



## Thomas A. Edison and the Path Between the Seas

Nearly 3,000,000 years ago, the Isthmus of Panama rose from the sea, little concerned about problems for subsequent human travel and shipping. About 10 years ago, Ron Dethlefsen bought an Edison Standard Phonograph and found with it a strange 2-minute Blue Amberol describing the Canal that the U.S. finally had to build between 1903 and 1915. A short speech, delivered by Harry Humphrey (*see p. 6*), the cylinder's secrets were locked up for many years. Only recently, with the help of a number of collectors and institutions, have we learned of the unknown connection between Thomas Edison and the Panama Canal.

The clues led to the well-known Panama-Pacific International Exposition, held in San Francisco from Feb. 20 to Dec. 4, 1915. This marvelous World's Fair, rising, as it were, from the ruins of the San Francisco earthquake, heralded the rebirth of this beautiful city. The entire fair was built with funds privately raised and each exhibitor tried to present something unique. But for our purposes, the most remarkable exhibit of all had to be a complete working model of the Panama Canal itself, installed in a football-

field-size stadium. (*see p. 5*).

This detailed work, showing not only the surrounding countryside of the Canal Zone, but all the hydroelectric stations, locks, trains, ships, towers, lights, etc., in full mechanical operation (!), was the center of attention in a fair which attracted over 18,000,000 visitors during its brief run. But what was hitherto unknown was that with the cooperation of Thomas Edison himself, a trolley-car system was installed around the Canal, holding 1200 visitors at a time, with each patron directly hooked up to a series of 45 phonographs which described the functions of the Canal on 15 records as the 135 wooden platforms made their way around the stadium every 23 minutes. (Nine platforms were used for loading passengers).

The souvenir booklet was located by Doug Boilesen (*p. 4 ff.*), the glass-plate negatives were picked up by Rene Rondeau, the original ledger cards and letter at the Edison Site were located by Leah Burt, the Fair guidebooks were found by Tom Sarro, the printing was done by Bruce Bailey, and APM was lucky enough to put it all together for our readers on the following pages.



If you can't get to the Canal, the Canal will come to you; patrons line up to see a complete working replica.



## THE PANAMA CANAL AT SAN FRANCISCO

Panama Canal Exhibition Company, 1915

### THE PANAMA CANAL

A complete, correct and faithful working reproduction of the Panama Canal and Canal Zone has been constructed at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, and inasmuch as this Exposition is being held in commemoration of the completion of that great undertaking this reproduction is of greater interest to the people than any other feature of this great Fair.

Major F.C. Boggs, chief of the Washington office of the Panama Canal, who inspected and checked this reproduction, reported as follows:

#### THE PANAMA CANAL

San Francisco, Cal., Feb. 26, 1915.

The Panama Canal Exhibition Company,  
San Francisco, California

Gentlemen:

This is to advise you that I have completed the checking and examination of your reproduction of the Panama Canal, as arranged with Colonel Geo. W. Goethals, and I find it so accurate that it will in half an hour impart to anyone a more complete knowledge of the Canal than would a visit of several days to the waterway itself.

I am of the opinion, which I think would be shared by the other officials of the Canal, that we would have been very fortunate if we had been able to present, as the Official Exhibit of the Panama Canal, at this Exposition, a reproduction similar to yours.

I am forwarding a copy of this report to Colonel Goethals who, I know, will be glad to learn that you have succeeded so splendidly in reproducing his great work. I congratulate you on the results you have achieved, and would recommend that everyone should see it.

*Yours very truly,*

F.C. Boggs

CHIEF OF THE WASHINGTON OFFICE  
PANAMA CANAL

This magnificent model of the Isthmus of Panama is located near the Fillmore street entrance to the Exposition Grounds and directly adjoins the Machinery Palace.

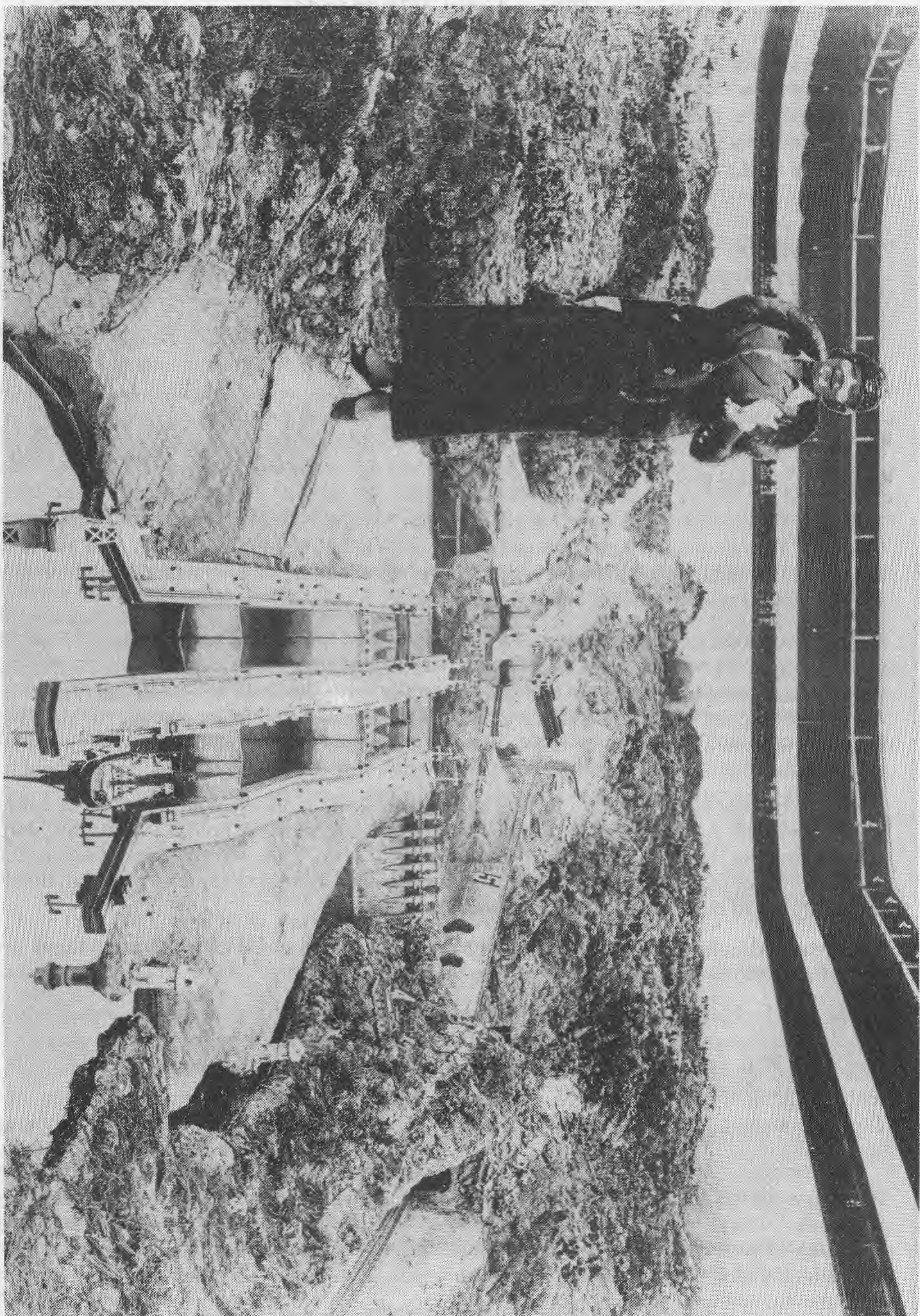
It covers almost five acres, and is the largest reproduction of any subject ever created. Never before has it been attempted to reproduce accurately such a great expanse of territory, representing as it does an area of more than one thousand square miles, with every minute detail worked out with engineering accuracy from plans and drawings furnished by the United States Government, thru the courtesy of the Isthmian Canal Commission and Major General Geo. W. Goethals, now Governor of the Canal Zone.

The Panama Canal, the greatest engineering achievement of the age, has aroused the interest of the people of every nation, and during the construction period thousands upon thousands of people traveled from every corner of the globe to see the gigantic undertaking which the United States, in spite of insurmountable difficulties, was pushing to completion.

There they marveled at the grandeur and immensity of the Culebra Cut, the enormous proportions of the Gatun Dam and the wonders of the lock mechanism. But for every person who was able to visit the Isthmus there were thousands who could not and it was primarily for the benefit of these that this complete working model was constructed.

The idea of building this tremendous model was first conceived by a prominent Chicago engineer while on a visit to Panama in 1911, and immediately on his return to the States he had work started on plans from which to determine the possibility of successfully carrying out his conception of what the undertaking should be. More than two years were devoted to designing and planning ways, means and methods for operating the locks, ships, trains and other moving objects, also to provide some method by which it would be possible to satisfactorily explain to each individual spectator the construction and purpose of the Canal, and this too, in a way that would be easily understood.





There were giants in the earth in those days! An unidentified woman poses next to the Gatun Locks.

*(from a 1915 8x10 glass negative)*



# CONTENTS OF THE TWO-MINUTE-STYLE 'PANAMA CANAL' BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDER

(Time: 1 min. 20 seconds)

"Zone G, No. 20, the Gatun Locks, with a total lift of 85 feet, consists of 3 locks, all in one flight — whereas on the Pacific side, they are separated, there being one at Pedro Miguel and 2 at Miraflores; otherwise, the Atlantic and Pacific locks are the same. The lock chambers are in all cases 1000 feet long, 110 feet wide, and about 80 feet deep. All locks are made in pairs so that vessels can travel in opposite directions at the same time. Over 6 million barrels of Atlas (A-T-L-A-S) cement were used exclusively in the concrete work on the Canal.

No. 21 is the spillway for the overflow of the excess waters of the Chagres River, which is the largest feeder of Gatun Lake. No. 22 is the hydroelectric power plant which furnishes light for the towns and cities within the Zone and power for the operation of the locks. This power was made possible by the enormous volume and head of water created through the formation of Gatun Lake."

[LETTER]

San Francisco, Cal.  
March 18, 1915

Dear Mr. [Miller Reese] Hutchinson:

We are almost down to a steady grind here, but it was H--- for five or six weeks. Before the opening (February 20th) I put in four 24-hour days in one stretch, rested for four hours in a half-dazed condition, put in twenty-four hours more, and now do fourteen to sixteen hours daily, Sundays and Holidays being quite normal.

Well, Mr. Hutchinson, it may please you to know that the telephone-phonographic lecture system you worked out is the talk of this part of the Country. Everybody marvels at its perfection. Everybody remarks that it is as wonderful as the real Panama Canal itself, as far as engineering goes. One woman wanted to know if you were the same man who invented the earphone, and I told her you were. She then remarked that she was hard of hearing, and is very much surprised to be able to hear the lecture.

All the boards came through in fine shape, excepting Zone P, which had three broken wires; the break we traced out and repaired. The phonographs are holding up in good shape, considering the terrific hammering they get in a day's run. There is only a seven-second rest in each cycle of operation, and the continued pounding loosens the small screws, so that it is necessary to go over them every morning.

The records each operate 3,500 times or more per week, and we find some of them wear quite badly at the end of ten days to two weeks.

The whole thing is proving a fine advertisement for the Edison Company. People notice the Edison machine, and the first question they ask is "How often do you change the records"? When we tell them "Every two or three weeks", they are surprised and want to know more about it.

I haven't been able to see anything else in the Exposition so I cannot tell you what's what.

We certainly had to spruce up our room when the telephone boards came. The boards were so well finished, and so handsome, that we had to dress up to receive them. To tell you the truth, I was expecting nice looking boards, though not as elaborate as the ones you had made up (I fought and fought for a nice looking room, but until the boards themselves came, I could not put it through.

**Jerry Chesler**

The above letter was sent by M.R. Hutchinson to T.A. Edison, C.W. Wilson, and Nelson Durand on March 24, 1915. Jerry Chesler (with the later help of Marshall) was in charge of the telephone-phonograph lecturing outfit that Hutchinson designed for the Panama Canal Exhibition Company.



After many suggestions had been worked out to unsatisfactory conclusions or found impractical, the possibility of a tremendous auditorium, equipped with an individual telephone received for each spectator, was investigated and in due time this resulted in the designing of the largest moving platform in the world. This revolving auditorium with its telephonic equipment, the system of traveling magnets which control the movement of the ships, the block system for moving the trains by which the miniature railroad is controlled, and other important features of the reproduction are all new and novel and are therefore herein fully described.

Fifteen months before the Exposition was to open construction, work was begun at San Francisco on the building which was to house this huge model and at about this time the United States Government first took up the details of its Panama Canal Exhibit. It then developed that the Government also contemplated exhibiting a model of the Canal, although one somewhat smaller in its proportion. Through the Exposition Officials the Government objected to the reproduction of the Panama Canal by private interests and all work was temporarily stopped. Within a short time, however, the Government sent a representative to San Francisco to investigate the plans covering the construction of the reproduction herein described, and as a result of this and numerous conferences at Washington with the Isthmian Canal Commission, the Chairman of the National Exhibit Board, and various other Departments, it was finally decided to allow the construction of the present reproduction to proceed. While there were other factors that influenced this decision, none was so potent and forceful as the fact that the Government was wholly without a method that would enable spectators to be satisfactorily told all they should know with respect to the Panama Canal, and although the present company offered to step aside and allow the Government to proceed, it was felt that the plan for a revolving auditorium, with telephonic connection, would prove of such tremendous educational value to the people as to warrant the withdrawal of the Government, and so now it is possible for every individual — who has not been able to visit Panama — to see and fully understand the great work of our Government.

Almost three months elapsed between the time the Government's objection was filed and withdrawn, so that it was necessary not

only to work the greatest number of men possible, but all Sundays and many nights in order to complete this great work in time for the formal opening of the Exposition.

The building erected especially to house this great reproduction conforms to the general type of the other Exposition Palaces, being an imitation of Travertine Marble. More than 2,000,000 feet of lumber was used to construct the building and the Canal. For plastering the building and constructing the model, 217 tons of cement and plaster were required, covering approximately ten acres of surface.

Within this building there is a large sheltered oblong amphitheatre which surrounds the model, which lies depressed within the walls of the amphitheatre to such a depth as to bring the ocean levels about 20 feet below the spectators, the effect being that of a general bird's-eye view, not only of the Canal, but the territory lying within and adjacent to the Canal Zone.

To enhance this general effect, the topography thus reproduced is carried out in panoramic perspective upon the vertical walls surrounding the actual territory reproduced, thus giving to the spectator a boundless horizon, miles in extent. The panoramic painting on these walls was done by noted artists and accurately portrays the topography of the Republic of Panama adjacent to the Canal Zone and shows an additional area of approximately four thousand square miles, so that the entire reproduction represents a section of The Isthmus of Panama more than 5,000 square miles in extent.

To facilitate the inspection of this gigantic reproduction, the revolving auditorium above referred to was provided. It is 1,440 feet in length and so constructed as to encircle the oval depression in which the model was built. The platform consists of 144 cars, each ten feet long, endlessly connected and propelled by electric motors. It is built with one tier of seats above the other and has a seating capacity of 1200 and moves around the model at a speed of eight and one-half (8½) inches per second, consuming about 23 minutes in making the entire circuit.

On the moving platform, there are 1200 opera chairs, each equipped with a duplex telephone receiver; that is, a receiver for each car attached to an adjustable handle so that the spectator can hold it to his ears without placing his arms in an unnatural or uncomfortable position. Through these receivers the spectators get a continual lecture



as the trip is made around the Canal Zone.

The system by which this lecture is delivered was invented and perfected especially for this purpose and consists of a novel combination of phonographs and telephones. This in itself marks a new era in sound reproduction. Sixty phonographs, located in a nearby room, (*see photo, p. 9*), deliver the lecture into telephone transmitters, which in turn transmit it thru a series of wires, rails and various devices to the telephone receivers attached to the seats on the revolving platform.

In order to perfect this scheme, the wiring of the cars was divided into forty-eight sections, each composed of three cars, and each receiving from the phonographs a different portion of the lecture. Of these forty-eight sections, three are always in the area where passengers board and leave the platform and forty-five are always in the lecture area. One phonograph talks to each of these forty-five sections simultaneously, so that of the sixty machines in the phonograph room, forty-five are always in operation and the remaining fifteen are reserved for emergency use.

As the platform passes the loading point, the passengers step aboard, take seats and adjust the telephone receivers to their ears. Within a moment, a metal shoe suspended from the cars on which they are riding makes contact with a rail attached to the ties beneath the cars and the spectators then begin to hear the first record of the lecture. As the platform moves along, the metal shoe slides along the contact rail under the cars and as the spectators on the platform hear the last of the first record, the metal shoe reaches the end of the first section of rail and passing thru a gap contacts with a second rail thru which the spectators hear the second record of the lecture, and so as the platform moves around, the various metal shoes make fifteen different contacts and the spectators hear fifteen different records, which deliver the lecture of some 3000 words.

In order to talk to the entire platform at one time, it is necessary to have three complete sets or forty-five records, as each phonograph talks to every third section of the platform. One phonograph, for instance having on it the first record of the lecture, talks to sections 1, 4, 7, 10, etc.; another phonograph having the same record talks to sections 2, 5, 8, 11, etc., and a third phonograph with the same record talks to sections 3, 6, 9, 12, etc.

After they finish talking to one section the phonographs automatically reset themselves and are started again by the contact which the platform makes with the contact rails beneath the cars. By this system every spectator must listen to a description of that part of the Canal which lies directly in front of him.

The idea of reproducing the Canal, as well as the phonographic-telephonic arrangement in conjunction with the moving platform, in fact this entire reproduction, was conceived by L.E. Myers, President of the L.E. Myers Co., Builders and Operators of Public Utilities, Chicago, Ill.

The building plans as well as those for all electrical and mechanical equipment were prepared by The L.E. Myers Co., who also handled the construction of this huge reproduction. In the preparation of these plans and all during its construction, this work was treated as an engineering problem and not as a theatrical venture, and it is due to this that such perfect results have been attained.

All the mechanical and electrical features here developed are fully covered by patents.

By far the most interesting feature of the model is the mechanical operation of the boats, trains, lighthouses, buoys, etc., all of these features being shown in full operation, exactly as they are on the Isthmus. The boats that pass back and forth thru the Canal are controlled by magnets operated on tracks placed beneath the floor of the model, the magnetic influence being exerted thru a 3-inch gap of air, wood, tar, felt, cement and water.

At the locks the ships drop the magnets and are towed through the locks by small electric locomotives, the exact counterpart of those used on the Isthmus. A most ingenious mechanism was invented for attaching the tow lines from the locomotives to the vessels in the locks. No mechanism is visible to the spectator, but as if by magic, the cables from the locomotives are made fast to the vessels and they are towed thru the locks, exactly as they are in the original. There are trains operating back and forth on the Panama Railroad between Panama and Colon at the same relative speed as the original. They are operated by electricity and controlled from a look-out tower on the roof of the building.

In the electrical end of the production there are twenty-one different applications of electricity, such as lighting, power, transportation, telephones and phonographs. Eighty-five miles of copper wire were used

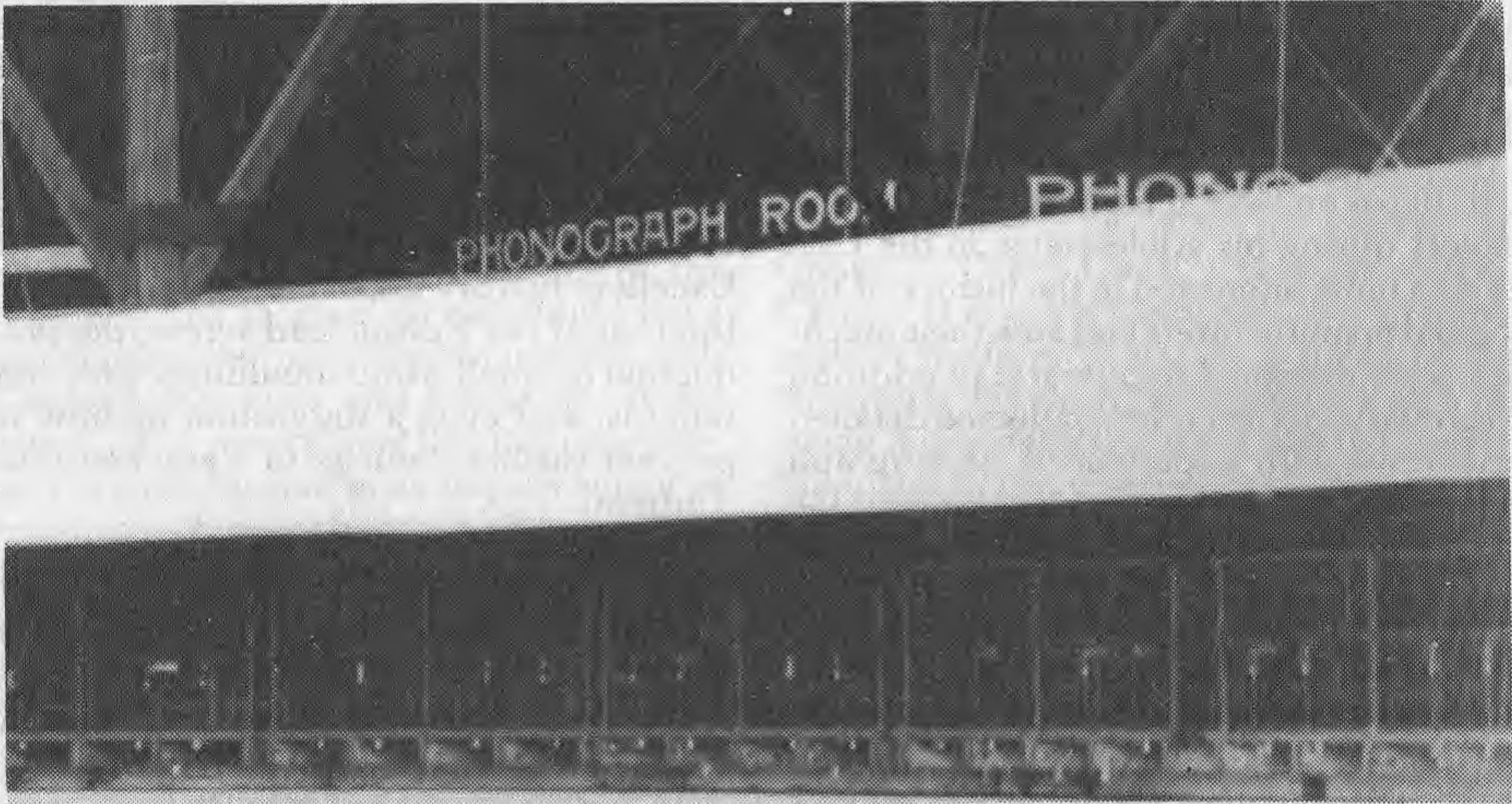


and one hundred and four (104) motors were installed. To operate the production, seven different voltages are required, varying from 2.4 to 10,000 volts, as well as both alternating and direct current.

The wireless stations at Colon, Balboa, and Darien flash messages to the vessels in Gatun Lake and at Sea and at night the miniature buoys and range towers flash forth their signals to the navigators exactly as they

do in the Canal at Panama, and the lights on the boats and in the houses of the cities and villages are gradually lighted, producing a most interesting and attractive effect.

Altogether this model of the Panama Canal is the most remarkable reproduction of any subject ever created, of absorbing interest to every man, woman and child and universally conceded to be the greatest attraction at the Exposition. ☐



This rare photo shows the Phonograph Room with its 60 electrically-driven cylinder machines; 45 were kept in continuous operation with only 7-second pauses between plays.

CARD No. 1

BLUE AMBEROL STOCK CARD

CATALOG No. ZONE L

TITLE PANAMA CANAL RECORD

PRODUCTION RECORD

SHIPPING RECORD

STOCK BALANCE

SHIPPING RECORD

STOCK BALANCE

ORDERS			DELIVERIES												
NO.	QUANTITY	TOTAL	DATE	QUANTITY	DUE	DATE	SHIPPED	TOTAL	DATE	ON HAND	DATE	SHIPPED	TOTAL	DATE	ON HAND
			11/26	6	0				11/26	6					

CARD No. 1

BLUE AMBEROL STOCK CARD

CATALOG No. ZONE K

TITLE PANAMA CANAL RECORD

PRODUCTION RECORD

SHIPPING RECORD

STOCK BALANCE

SHIPPING RECORD

STOCK BALANCE

ORDERS			DELIVERIES												
NO.	QUANTITY	TOTAL	DATE	QUANTITY	DUE	DATE	SHIPPED	TOTAL	DATE	ON HAND	DATE	SHIPPED	TOTAL	DATE	ON HAND
			11/26	5	0				11/26	5					

CARD No. 1

BLUE AMBEROL STOCK CARD

CATALOG No. ZONE P

TITLE PANAMA CANAL RECORD

PRODUCTION RECORD

SHIPPING RECORD

STOCK BALANCE

SHIPPING RECORD

STOCK BALANCE

ORDERS			DELIVERIES												
NO.	QUANTITY	TOTAL	DATE	QUANTITY	DUE	DATE	SHIPPED	TOTAL	DATE	ON HAND	DATE	SHIPPED	TOTAL	DATE	ON HAND
			11/26	7	0				11/26	7					

Original ledger cards from the ENHS show some Panama Canal records still on hand in 1926.



## BOOK REVIEW

*The Compleat Talking Machine, by Eric Reiss, Vestal Press, 191 pp.*

Dennis Valente

This new book by Eric Reiss is a user-friendly study of the mechanical reproduction of sound, with the emphasis placed on the mechanical aspects. Written in a lively and engaging style, with numerous photos, it provides insight into the acoustic reproduction of sound as well as a step-by-step maintenance and repair guide for turn-of-the-century talking machines.

Now a resident of Denmark, Eric Reiss first began collecting early acoustic record players during his adolescence in the U.S. He was most interested in the history of the original manufacturers and how their machines were designed to operate. In addition to his own experience, he conducted detailed interviews with experienced phonograph repairmen, and thus was able to present the best possible methods, along with alternate techniques.

The importance of good work habits during restoration is stressed, to protect both the restorer and the restored. Some excellent holding jigs are described which greatly improve mechanical accuracy and worker safety. I liked the use of 'V' blocks to hold a spring barrel during spring installation. The wood dowel to drive stubborn shafts is fundamentally sound advice. Even the use of a banana as a stylus holder is safe and useful, if not novel. Excellent advice on removing old varnish is accompanied by proper warnings about the risks inherent in the different chemicals being used. A hobby would not be much fun if a collector could damage either himself or his phonograph.

A thorough understanding as to *why* something works is presented alongside an explanation of *how* it works. Examples of this useful technique are found in every section. Fiber gears were made by pressing cloth with glue, and that is why they are never to be oiled. Wood worms can survive thirty months and may even reappear three years after a phonograph cabinet is refinished. The needle bar on a disc reproducer, when properly set, should only *rest lightly* against its diaphragm to allow the fullest freedom of movement. Don't be surprised if, after reading this book, you suddenly learn why a technique you already know how to do is improved when the reason why it is done is finally revealed.

Many suggestions for quick fixes or less-expensive alternatives to new replacements are offered. This book is especially useful when a part is needed and the prospects for ever encountering it again in the field are remote. Then the time and effort required to measure and set up for the production of that one part will eclipse the value of the entire project. Of course, if the machine is historically or economically valuable, this kind of repair may be warranted. In this context, many fine techniques are revealed. Excellent tips are given concerning the restoration of the Edison lead screw, the production of small wood mouldings with clay moulds, and even a suggestion on how to prevent further damage to a cracked Blue Amberol.

I never imagined that I would approve of using a glass stylus for playing cylinder records. Yet a very interesting discussion in this book has convinced me that with proper inspection, as described by Eric, easy to make substitutes can be useful. He quotes from measurements he has taken from many Columbia reproducers and defends the inconsistency from making glass balls. However, there are a few points where I feel Eric is employing questionable economy.

In all but one case, when we part company in our approach to restoration, our disagreement is due to the fact that as a professional restorer, we have a greater capacity for fabricating replacement parts than the average reader. I do not see the value, for example, in spending a great deal of time repairing a broken main spring when it will probably break again soon; it is in all likelihood 'set', and perfect new replacements are readily available for about twenty dollars. Although Eric appears to be more willing to salvage an old spring than I am, he does balance his approach with opposing theories in his book, which features a comprehensive list of suppliers for springs and many other parts a home-restorer might need. As to removing a pot-metal reproducer stuck in its carriage, I like APM's method of simply placing the carriage assembly in the freezer for about an hour; the reproducer will then come out with only gentle finger pressure.

However, no machinist will debate the ill

(cont'd on p. 12)



## FROM THE GOLDEN AGE... The End of the Not Quite 'Complete Caruso'

Joe Klee

Way back in 1978, the RCA record company began an ambitious project. Before the project was over they planned to re-issue *everything* recorded by Enrico Caruso which was available from the Victor archives on LP with improved digital sound, thanks to the Soundstream process of Thomas G. Stockham jr. They began with Volume Four, the first session with orchestra, 2/1/06. They have gone forward in somewhat chronological order, sporadically issued here and there and have finally arrived at Volume 16, the end of Caruso's recorded career.

While the sound on the first LPs of the series was not as good as one might have hoped, the more recent issues come through as remarkably clear and listenable. While some at RCA seem to feel that this improvement in sound is due to an improvement in recording techniques between 1906 and 1921, I feel that a comparison with the '78' issues shows that the first volumes of the re-issue series lack the vocal presence of the shellac predecessors. If there was a period of trial and error, we can regret that Volumes 4, 5, 6, and 7 could have come to us in better sound and we can rejoice that since these early re-issues, the sound restoration process has brought to those of us who arrived on this planet too late to hear Enrico Caruso some semblance of what the voice must have sounded like.

In general, the liner notes are well researched and intelligently written (some more so than others) until we get to Volume 16 in which Ted Fagan attempts to sort out for us what is good about Caruso's last recordings and to dismiss the balance as "warts". The quoting of Oliver Cromwell's remark to the portraitist, Mr. Lely, is not sufficient excuse to allow Mr. Fagan, (a discographer, not a musicologist) to sit in judgment on Caruso. I would simply point out that the results of the final session of 9/16/20 which produced "Deh, ch'io ritorni" from *L'Africana*, "Bois epais" from *Amadis de Gaule*, Bartlett's "A Dream" and the "Domine Deus" and "Crucifixus" from Rossini's *Petit Messe Solennelle* need no justification from me or from Ted.

As we remarked in reviewing Volumes 12 and 13, there is a problem with late Caruso recordings. There were, by that time, precious few recordable opera excerpts that Caruso had not already done for Victor.

This is even more true of Volumes 14, 15,

and 16. Yet, we do find "Come un bel di maggio" from *Andrea Chenier*, "Rachel, quand du Seigneur" from *La Juive* as well as duets from *La Forza del Destino* and *L'elisir d'Amore* with the baritone of the hour, Giuseppe de Luca. And if that weren't enough, songs like "Santa Lucia" and "A Vucchella" are important additions to the collections of Italian song as sung by its finest practitioner of the day.

There is also a recording about which I've often wondered. Every Caruso collector has heard, or owns his copy of, George M. Cohan's "Over There", sung by Enrico Caruso. It is often dismissed as a patriotic gesture in time of war or a token of the friendship between the composer and the singer. I wonder if it was not also the toes-in-the-water to test whether or not there was a pop market for Caruso records. Had the man lived and the career continued, might we not have found Enrico Caruso to be the harbinger of what came about when Mario Lanza, Ezio Pinza and Placido Domingo discovered the crossover market? Conjecture, true, but an interesting one nevertheless.

Yet, the lack of material does not really excuse such miscasting as Caruso singing Lenski's aria from *Eugen Onegin* in Italian or such trivial minutiae as Garibaldi's Hymn. Who made these decisions — Caruso, Calvin Child, or both? Why didn't somebody say no? Would anybody have listened if somebody *had* said no? Interesting questions... but if you run out of pearls, then you have to put in some gems of lesser value. Okay, those who are fans of Garibaldi's Hymn can let me have it. I deserve it. And they deserve Garibaldi's Hymn as well.

Volume 14 includes at least one major error. Side 2, band 3 is labeled as "M'appari, tutt'amor" from *Marta* C-3100-2 dated 4/15/17. It is in fact the same selection C-3100-1 of 2/11/06 which appeared on Volume 4. Unfortunately, nobody at RCA discovered this until it was too late to remaster the LP.

Also there needs to be raised at this time the question of alternate masters which were elinated from the Soundstream Series because Aida Favia-Artsay doubted their authenticity as alternates. As Gary A. Galo pointed out in *APM*, Vol. VII, no. 9, a number of these *were* found to be legitimate alternates. These include "Oh! Lumiere de jour" from Rubinstein's *Nero*, "L'alba separa dalla luce l'ombra"



by Tosti and the 1917 recording of the sextet from *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Unless I've missed something, the other alternates detailed by Galo have indeed been included in the Soundstream collection. I would hope that RCA will give us this missing material in a subsequent addendum, hopefully with suitable acknowledgement to Gary Galo and APM.

All of this brings us to a discussion of just how complete is complete anyway. There are three classes of omissions. There are the things we don't know about, so they must of necessity be omitted. There are things we know about which have not yet been found; these must be omitted since RCA cannot issue what it can't find or what was destroyed. And then there things we know about which RCA has (or has access to), which are omitted through error, such as the second take of the *Marta* aria or because their authenticity was in doubt... such as the items researched by Galo. If complete means including everything ... excluding nothing ... I guess RCA is entitled to use the word 'complete', once they issue the pre-1906 recordings (Vols 1, 2, and 3) which are scheduled for early 1987, and providing they do issue the addendum with the missing items detailed above. But what happens the day after the complete issue is completed and somebody discovers a copy of the missing duets from *Tosca* with Farrar or Nevin's "The Rosary"? All of a sudden, complete could become incomplete. Then again, what happens ten years hence - when new technologies allow further sound enhancements ... the state of the art advances and we get these records with greater presence and better sonic qualities - I'll be glad for that too!

Already RCA is talking about putting Caruso on compact disc. I'm anxious to hear what that will sound like. If they don't try to gild the lily, it could be an excellent idea. One thing for sure, it will certainly be a controversial move as I'm sure the first Caruso LP re-issues were. I can still remember the comment of a jazz critic who admitted in print that he preferred RCA's 45 rpm donut records to Columbia's 33 1/3 rpm Lps. When asked why, his comment went something like ... I'll be damned if I'll sit back and let somebody else tell me what order to listen to my 78s in!

Meanwhile, here is the recorded output of Enrico Caruso from 1906 till the end (with a few exceptions). It is a marvel of great singing which many of us feel has not yet found its equal and in all probability never will. □

(Continued from page 10)

effects of using polishing compound instead of the correct reamer when fitting a stationary bearing. In this case, the proper tool is the only way to obtain the necessary perfect fit. After all, the polishing compound could cause permanent damage to both bearing and shaft. I recommend the fine resource cited in CTM for a comprehensive understanding of how to deal with bearings. While you are doing additional reading, look at the books on wood fillers and refinishing.

*The Compleat Talking Machine* is certain to become the most useful 'tool' in any phonograph collector's work shop and library. In addition to the step-by-step repairs described with skill and clarity, this book features chapters on related topics, such as electroplating and cylinder record recording, which provide a good foundation on which one can build a more comprehensive understanding of complex matters.

Even for those collectors who have no desire to disassemble a gramophone, CTM is enjoyable reading. The book provides many illustrations which explain why mechanical record players perform as they do and how music is produced from a spinning record. Over one hundred words commonly used by collectors in discussing vintage talking machines and records are clearly defined. The excellent photography was done by Reiss himself from several notable collections. There are literally hundreds of photos of parts, gears, horns, and nearly 100 complete phonographs. The captions are well-written and accurate. I especially enjoyed the selection of phonographs pictured in Appendix F. Many of the important pioneers in the industry appear in Appendix B. Useful names and addresses in Appendix E might be some of the best leads you get this year.

All in all, this is the best book on the subject, and makes a perfect gift for yourself or a friend, for the beginner as well as the advanced collector. Everyone will learn something useful from it.

*Dennis Valente, with his wife Patricia, own and operate the Antique Phonograph Shop in Floral Park, NY. They have many years experience as professionals in the field of antique phonograph restoration. The Compleat Talking Machine may be obtained through their shop, from Vestal Press, or directly from APM.* □



## Remembering Ted Fagan

Tim Brooks

The field of record research has lost one of its less known but most valuable members. Ted Fagan, 66, died suddenly in his Manhattan apartment on Jan. 31, 1987, of an acute asthma attack. Ted published relatively few articles, and was known mostly to collectors of classical vocal recordings (of which he had a superb collection). However, he was also one half of the driving force behind a massive discographical project that will benefit practically all collectors and researchers of recorded sound. Twenty-four years ago, Ted, as a collector, innocently wrote to RCA Victor requesting information about some Red Seal discs in his collection. Discovering how spotty published information on classical recordings was, yet how much was available in the company's own files, he resolved to compile and publish it himself. Then, as he once told me, "I saw how many gaps there were for the popular numbers, and decided, well, I might as well do the whole bloody thing."

The "whole bloody thing" was nothing less than the entire history of recording at Victor from 1900 to 1950. The size of such a project was daunting, but Ted developed a fascination with it, becoming quite determined to do it with precision. Fortunately, he had a partner in the project, the respected West Coast collector and researcher William Moran.

By profession Ted was an interpreter, one of the elite corps of specialists at the United Nations who make it possible for delegates speaking many languages to debate global issues (he eventually became the UN's Chief Interpreter). A cultured man, Argentinian by birth, he knew many world leaders personally. Despite the rarified political circles in which he moved, he never lost his sense of perspective about life, however. I will always treasure one particular image of him; he was often required to spend long hours standing by in the small, glass-enclosed Interpreter's Booth high above the General Assembly, in case his skills were needed (Ted was an expert in Spanish-English). As world leaders argued great issues of war and peace on the

floor below, Ted would sit quietly up there, insulated from the melee -- meticulously posting early Victor matrix numbers on little 3x5 cards. It makes you think about what really is important in life!

There was a lot of posting to do. The information was available -- Victor headquarters is only a few blocks from the UN -- but fifty years of recording by the world's largest label adds up to an immense amount of untangling of data. Ted devoted the rest of his non-professional life to the project. I, and I'm sure others, spent many a dinner with him arguing over formats, what to include or exclude, and how, finally, to get it all into print. But it was very much Fagan and Moran's project.

Ted retired from the UN in the late 1970s and continued to work on the Victor project nearly full time in the 1980s, acquiring one of the first personal computers to assist him. In later years he became very concerned about the future of the project, which he sensed would outlive him, and provided that his estate would be used to set up a trust to ensure its completion. For a time it seemed as if it might never see the light of day, however, since no one (including Victor), was interested in providing any funding. At last, in 1983, the first volume was published by Greenwood Press, covering 1900-1903. A second volume (1903-1908) has just come out, and a third, consisting of an index of all catalog numbers referenced back to their original matrix numbers, is partially complete. There may eventually be 20 to 30 volumes in all -- if the project can be completed.

Data has been compiled for virtually the entire 1900-1950 period, but a great deal of work remains to get it into print. Bill Moran has said that he will carry on, and looks for help from fellow collectors. A massive and definitive work, the Victor Project will surely stand as a monument to two collectors who contributed far more than they took from their "hobby". Would that we all could say as much. □



## NOTICE

Don't forget the ARSC annual conference from May 28-30, 1987 at George Washington University in Washington, DC. Please contact Phillip Rochlin, P.O. Box 75082, Washington, DC 20013. Or (703) 591-6746.

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Victor IV with large Victor fluted mahogany horn - \$1100; Edison Maroon Gem with K reproducer - \$600. Michael Glicksman, 147 Highland Avenue., Middletown, NY 10940. Or (914) 343-0136

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Learn more about antique phonographs and radios: join the Vintage Radio and Phonograph Society. Enjoy our monthly publication, the **Reproducer**, free ads to members, swap meets, annual auctions, monthly meetings, and much more. For free issue and further info, write: Secretary, **V.R.P.S.**, P.O. Box 165345, Irving, TX 75016. (TF)

Beautiful Victor Monarch Special, rear-mount with large oak wooden horn and nicely carved base, \$2600. Edison Concert phonograph, mod. A, no cover, otherwise excellent; Edison Idelia crane, 24" long brass horn, with 15 5" Concert records in original boxes, \$3200. Call Dr. De-Andrea, (203) 288-1895 between 6-9 pm. (VIII-5)

Edison, Columbia, Victor, etc. Phonos For Sale. Also parts Bought and Sold. Write for list. SASE. Ralph C. Woodside, 51 W. Main St., Georgetown, MA 01834. Or (617) 373-5947 eve's. (VIII-5)

### PHONO MUSIC SHOW!

Cranford, NJ Fall 1987 Show Date: Sunday, **Sept 20**. Largest show and sale of vintage phonographs, music boxes and automated instruments in the Eastern U.S. One day only, at the very accessible Best Western Coachman Inn, adjacent Exit 136, Garden State Pkwy (No early buyer's fee). Our spring event saw dealers attending from as far as California and Texas. Buyers from four continents attended. Admission with this ad, only \$2. Your name and address will bring a copy of our free newsletter, **Noteworthy News**, with interesting features about the hobby and descriptive of the show. For further information, contact **Lynn Bilton**, Box 25007, Chicago, IL 60625, or (312) 677-7455.

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1898 Edison Spring Motor, Edison Red Gem, Model E, Victor Mod. R front-mount, all in very good cond. Send SASE for prices, \$1 ea. photo. Wm. R. Eisele, 6514-G Green Tree Rd., Middletown, OH 45044. (VIII-6)

Oak Schoolhouse Victrola in excellent cond. Late 'teens model with Victrola #2 reproducer. \$1800. with records. Phone evenings (215) 745-8480. D. K. Szabo, 7032 Oxford Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19111 (VIII-7)

I am again producing all the wood parts for antique phonographs; wooden horns, oak & mahogany, etc. If you have Catalog #4 (1982), please add 20% to prices. Bill Moore, 10820 6th St., Gilroy, CA 95020. Or (408) 847-2845.

## PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

Interested in corresponding with other serious phonograph collectors in my area. Please write David Rouse, 5736 S. Robert Ave., Cudahy, WI 53110.



## PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

Would like to correspond with owners of mahogany-cased Victor V's or obtain literature/catalogs on same. Also want to buy mahogany-cased Edison Gem or Fire-side. Ken Blazier, 2937 Elda St., Duarte, CA 91010. (VIII-5)

Phonograph Collectors are invited to join the California Antique Phonograph Society (**CAPS**), and may send \$10. for a one-year U.S. membership (Jan.-Dec.). This fee includes the Newsletter and meetings in W. Covina, CA. Send SASE for more information. C.A.P.S., P. O. Box 67, Duarte, CA 91010.

Receive "In the Groove", along with other benefits from the Michigan Antique Phonograph Society (**MAPS**). \$12 a year gives you full membership and 12 issues of the Newsletter. You will get to know collectors all over the U.S. Free classified ads available to members. Join now or send SASE for more info. MAPS, 2609 Devonshire, Lansing, MI 48910. (TF)

Wanted: Cases for Columbia Coin-op machines. Sam Sheena, Days: (516) 334-5959, eve's (516) 626-1209. Or write to Sam Sheena, 534 Main St., Westbury, NY 11590.

Want Victor Orthophonic phonographs: Credenza, Granada, Colony, Consolette, etc. Any cond. Ralph Banta, Rt. 1, Green Forest, AR 72638. (IX-1)

I would like to correspond with owners of Columbia & Edison coin-op machines to obtain catalogs, literature, prices, etc. for future purchase. David Cosmo, P.O. Box 522, Somers, NY 10589. (VIII-9)

Need Busy Bee phono with plate base, cylinders too. Earl Burtman, 423 B Dedham St., Newton Center, MA 02159.

## PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

Want Victor III or V, prefer wood horn but will consider any reasonably priced machine. Will also consider other oak models. Kent Schone-man, 7904 Mullen Rd., Len-exa, KS 66215. Or (913) 888-0751.

Phonographs wanted: Regina-phone, Little Wonder; Victor I tonearm; Edison Opera horn or just elbow; also Vogue records. Jim Kenealy, 4015 NE 178th St., Seattle, WA 98155. Or (206) 364-1436.

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Motor portion only (below baseplate) for Edison Class Melectric phonograph. Have extra baseplate. Allen Koenigsberg, 502 E. 17th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226.

Want case & motor for small rear-mount Columbia-related disc phono. T. J. Novak, 190 Barker Rd. E., Gilbert, MN 55741. (VIII-5)

Black carriage arm for repro-ducer to fit onto Edison Spring Motor Phono (w/ adj. screw). Good price or trade. Sami Sheena, 5 Rolling Hill Rd., Old Westbury, NY 11568. Or (516) 626-1209.

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## RECORDS FOR SALE

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Cylinders wanted: Edison Blue Amberol #3756 'Let Us Not Forget'; also #4215 'Rag-time at Pumpkin Center' by Cal Stewart. Price/cond. first letter. Bill Eigenfeld, 388 Ave. X, Brooklyn, NY 11223. Or (718) 645-9415.

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Books about Radios, Records, Phonographs. Current titles: how to do it, price guides, history, reprints, much else. 78rpm supplies. Long SASE for 6-page list. **The Sound Box**, Dept. APM, Box 226, Ettrick, WI 54627. (IX-3)

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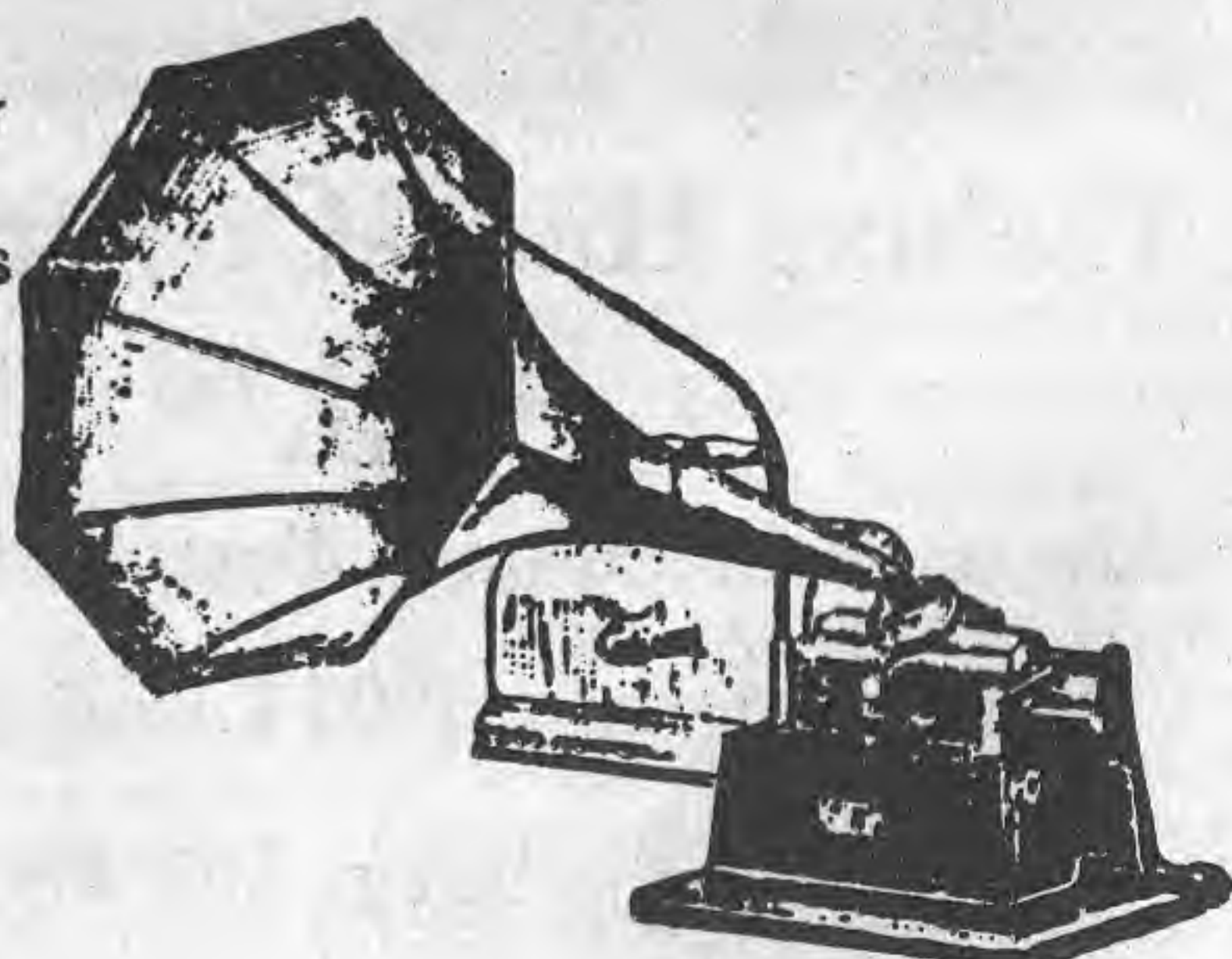
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